

# News and Reviews

Vol. 1, No. 2  
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## Using (Not Showing) Cross-Cultural Films and Videos

>> by Ellen Summerfield

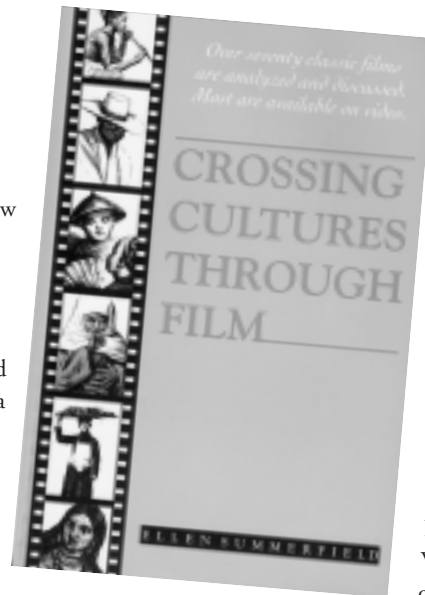
Some of us remember the old days when teachers who needed to be absent from their classroom left instructions for a film to be shown.

This use of film as a baby-sitter is gone. Educators now recognize the value of film—not merely to transmit information about a culture—but as a means of involving students emotionally and intellectually with other cultures. Film proves itself to be so powerful that in a span as short as five minutes, you can bring alive people, places, and issues that otherwise would remain remote and uninspiring.

Given such a potent tool, we need to learn how to use it. The more I work with film, the more I realize how exciting and varied the pedagogy can be. Of course, as you experiment with film, you will discover your own approaches and

techniques. There are, however, a few guidelines you might wish to keep in mind.

At the heart of my own pedagogy is the assumption that cross-cultural films should not stand alone, but rather should be part of a unit that includes warm-up and follow-up components. A warm-up allows you to set the stage for the film. Some of my most serious mistakes in using film have resulted from a failure to design an appropriate warm-up. I now realize, for example, that for many films I must provide at least a basic historical and geographical context. The eloquent film *Go Masters* (1984), which links the fates of two brilliant *go* players—one Chinese and one



Japanese—over a period of decades, can hardly be understood without a rudimentary knowledge of Sino-Japanese conflicts in this century. Even the much more accessible film *The Joy Luck Club* (1993) remains flat and superficial without a knowledge of the major historical events, such as the Japanese invasion of Kweilin during World War II, which causes one of the film characters to flee Chongqing.

Additionally, the warm-up allows you to remove distractions that can inadvertently destroy the viewing. Students who are accustomed

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From the documentary *China: The PBS Series*. See review page 8.

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## Asian Educational Media Service

The Asian Educational Media Service (AEMS) is a program of the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. AEMS offers information about where to find audio-visual media resources for teaching and learning about Asia, and advice about which ones may best suit your needs. In addition to *AEMS News and Reviews*, published twice a year, services include a free call-in/write-in service and a Web site. To add your name to our mailing list, request additional copies of the newsletter to use in workshops or to share with your colleagues, or ask for help in locating resources, please contact us.

AEMS is made possible by generous support from The Freeman Foundation and The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership.

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# What's New?

## Web Site Receives "Essential" Rating

The AEMS Web site recently received the highest possible rating ("essential") from *The Asian Studies WWW Monitor*. The *Monitor* is an on-line journal and a key element of the Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library. It is edited by Dr. T. Matthew Ciolek and published by the Internet Publications Bureau, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. The journal monitors developments in Asian Studies' cyberspace, compiling information about the latest Web sites relevant to social sciences research of Asia and the Pacific region and evaluating them in terms of their scholarly and factual quality and the usefulness of content. A summary and evaluation of the AEMS Web site appeared in the *Monitor* <<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/asia-www-monitor.html>> the week of September 14 and was disseminated through the on-line discussion lists, H-Asia and H-Japan, September 16.

## New Web Site Coming Soon!

The AEMS Web site currently is being redesigned. The new site, scheduled for launch in November, will feature a new look, improved navigation and searching, and easy access to information about the latest media resources and reviews commissioned by AEMS. Particularly exciting about the new site will be ways in which you can contribute by adding your own reviews of media you have used in teaching and learning about Asia. Look us up and share your experience with your colleagues!

## Workshops and Conferences

An important part of the work of AEMS is participation in workshops and conferences to disseminate information about the service and new resources. AEMS presented a session, "Audio-Visuals for Teaching Asian Studies," at the K-12 teachers workshop held in conjunction with the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, on September 25.

In October, AEMS will attend a workshop of educational outreach projects focused on precollegiate Japanese studies at the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership in New York City. In November, AEMS will share exhibition space (Booth 111) with the National Clearinghouse for U.S.-Japan Studies and Social Studies Development Center of Indiana University at the National Council for Social Studies annual conference in Anaheim, California.

Also this academic year, AEMS will be represented at the annual conferences of the American Anthropological Association, Association for Asian Studies, and ASIANetwork. At the Association for Asian Studies meeting, David W. Plath will participate in a roundtable, "Myth or Reality?: Oppression by the Family (*Ie*) and the State since Meiji Japan," in which he will present the latest AEMS video project, *Makiko's New World* (See article about new videos, page 3.).

## New Offices

Over the summer, AEMS moved to new offices. The new space makes possible the creation of a resource library of videos and curriculum materials. These resources will be available for viewing and browsing on site, and eventually for loan. Although currently in formation, AEMS welcomes educators living in or visiting the area to the library at 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Room 213, Urbana, Illinois. To contact us, please use the addresses and numbers printed on this page.

## Cross-Cultural

*continued from page 1*

to slick, fast-paced, high-budget Hollywood productions, for example, will have no trouble relating to the recent film *Seven Years in Tibet* (1997). But they may instantly dismiss an indigenous production from Tibet, judging it to be an inferior film altogether, simply because it does not meet their technological expectations. Thus as part of the warm-up you can help students to view

indigenous, foreign, and non-Hollywood productions with new eyes.

Warm-up exercises can also provide emotional preparation for a film. If you are trying to break down stereotypes about Asians by showing a film such as *Slaying the Dragon* (1988) or *All Orientals Look the Same* (1986), you can review the concept of stereotyping in general, ask students to make a list of their own stereotypes of Asians, and then discuss them in small groups. Asian or Asian-American students can help others understand

## New Videos from the Media Production Group

The Media Production Group (MPG), an affiliate of AEMS, recently released one new documentary video on Japan and expects to release another in January 1999.

*Barbarians: Fierce and Friendly* (15 minutes) was produced by Ikeda Hajime, directed and edited by Chet Kincaid; it was written and is narrated and hosted by Ronald P. Toby, noted historian of Japan and Professor of History and Head of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Illinois. Like peoples elsewhere, Japanese throughout their history have encountered aliens in reality and in fantasy, and then have tried to incorporate them into their view of the world. Toby here examines ways that Japanese have expressed their understanding of the foreign as exemplified by Koreans, Okinawans, Chinese, and Americans both black and white. The program includes a rich array of drawings, paintings, and other visual images, mostly from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Japan, showing aliens in popular art and aliens as enacted in festivals of the era. The program is suitable for use at the secondary-school level and above and for courses not only about Japan but about ethnic relations anywhere. Copies may be ordered by sending prepayment or a purchase order to AEMS. Price is \$40 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

*Makiko's New World* (60 minutes) is in its final phase of editing. Using family albums, historical photos, scenes of present-day Kyoto, and dramatized re-enactments, the program evokes the daily life of a busy merchant family in Japan of 1910. The program is based on—and can be used together with—the book, *Makiko's Diary: A Merchant Wife in 1910 Kyoto* (Stanford University Press, 1995), a prize-winning translation by Kazuko Smith of Cornell University. The diary is that of a twenty-year-old Makiko, a young bride and newest member of the Nakano household, which runs a drugstore and pharmacy on the east side of the old capitol city of Kyoto. It was produced and designed by David W. Plath, directed and edited by Chet Kincaid, the MPG team who created the award-winning documentary, *Fit Surroundings*. ♦



ABOVE: On the set of *Makiko's New World*.

LEFT: *Barbarians: Fierce and Friendly* includes Japanese artwork like this woodblock print by Nishimura Shingenaga, "Festival Masquerade: Parade of the Foreigners" (circa 1750), showing Japanese masquerading as Koreans and marching past spectators in the Mitsui shop in Edo.

what types of stereotypes they face and how stereotyping makes them feel and behave.

The viewing itself can be as short as a few minutes or as long as an entire feature film or documentary. My best successes have come from experimenting with short clips, since these allow for ample warm-up and follow-up. But, depending on your purposes, you might well wish to use a film in its entirety.

No matter what the length, be sure to include sufficient time for follow-up. Students need to

process what they have seen, whether in the form of discussion, writing, or activities. In our upcoming book *Discovering American Cultures on Film*, my co-author Sandra Lee and I include, for example, a wide range of follow-up exercises for the film *Come See the Paradise* (1990), which deals with the Japanese-American internment during World War II. Students can conduct an informal survey of fellow students, friends, or relatives to see how much they know about this period; they can read Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's autobio-

graphical account *Farewell to Manzanar*; they can research the situation of the "No-no boys"; they can write an essay describing how they would feel if they suddenly had to dispose of all their belongings within a single week.

As you select your films and build instructional units, always keep your particular group in mind—its interests, needs, knowledge base, and emotional maturity—and try to imagine the effect the film will have on the group. While some films

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encountering difference. A great deal is accomplished if students are motivated to learn more about other cultures, if they begin to explore and acquire new interests. At the same time, we can use film to help students undertake the hard work of analyzing why difference keeps people apart. As they learn to confront their own fears, biases, and misconceptions, they will be taking important steps toward crossing cultural borders in their own lives. ♦



**Ellen Summerfield** is Director of International Programs at Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon. She has written and spoken widely on aspects of international education and has been involved in research and training about the use of film and video for over a decade. She is the author of *Crossing Cultures Through Film* (1993) and, with co-author Sandra Lee, of *Discovering American Cultures on Film* (forthcoming).

*Videography*

(Note: Source listed may not be the only or the primary source of the video.)

*All Orientals Look the Same* (1986, 1 1/2 minutes, Director: Valerie Soe) is available from NAATA Distribution. Price is \$95 for purchase and \$40 for rental.

*Come See the Paradise* (1990, 135 minutes, Director: Alan Parker) is available from Facets Video. Price is \$19.98.

*Go Masters* (1984, 121 minutes, Directors: J. Sato and D. Jishun) is no longer available for purchase. (Facets Video distributed the video.)

*A Great Wall* (1986, 88 minutes) is available from Cheng & Tsui Company. Price is \$49.95.

*Iron and Silk* (1990, 94 minutes, Director: Shirley Sun) is available from Facets Video. Price is \$19.98.

*The Joy Luck Club* (1993, 139 minutes, Director: Wayne Wang) is available from Facets Video. Price is \$19.95.

*Satya: Prayer for the Enemy* (1993, 28 minutes) is available from Satya Film Library. Price is \$195 for purchase and \$45 for rental.

*Slaying the Dragon* (1988, 60 minutes, Director: Deborah Gee) is available from NAATA Distribution and Women Make Movies. Price is \$175 for purchase and \$50 or \$75 for rental.

*Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1990, 82 minutes, Directors: Christine Choy and Renee Tajima) is available from Filmmakers Library. Price is \$395 for purchase and \$95 for rental.

## Japanese: The Spoken Language Interactive CD-ROM Program

>> Based on *Japanese: The Spoken Language, Part I* by Eleanor Harz Jordan with Mari Noda. Written by Mari Noda. Published by Yale University Press. Distributed by The Annenberg/CPB Collection and Yale University Press. Available for both Macintosh and Windows platforms. 1997.

It is common knowledge that *Japanese: The Spoken Language* is one of the most widely used textbooks for teaching Japanese in the United States. Everyone who teaches Japanese realizes the great contribution it has made in the field of Japanese language education. *Japanese: The Spoken Language (JSL)* has already



been reviewed in several journals including the *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* which contained a review by Seiichi Makino and Charles J. Quinn in its November 1991 (Volume 25, Number 2) issue. In this review of the *Interactive CD-ROM Program*, I will concentrate on its usefulness for those who use the *JSL* text.

The CD-ROM program is one component of *Japanese: The Spoken Language Multimedia Collection* which includes a textbook, a videotape, audio-cassette tapes, culture videos, and supplements and guides for students and teachers. This program “can be used for group instruction in high schools, colleges, and business settings. It is also effective as a self-study tool for individual students who are serious about studying spoken interaction in Japanese” (User’s Guide, p. 1).

In contrast to the textbook which has sometimes been characterized as “unfriendly,” the CD-ROM program is easy to use. The author cautions that the CD-ROM program should be used together with the other media, because it does not include some of the features included in them such as more in-depth explanations of grammar points or English translations of drills. However, the advantage of the CD-ROM program stands out distinctly. It is extremely user-friendly and interactive, motivating students to spend more time with this resource.

Students can interact with core conversations in a variety of ways. They can take part in conversations. They can choose to initiate conversations or take on the role of respondent. They can pick up the conversation at mid-point. If they want to see the translation, it is there. With a click, they can get notes on expressions included in the conversations. The drill sections are similarly organized. Students can practice to their hearts content. They can record their voices and listen to them as well.

In the “Introduction to Japanese” are included helpful sections on the “Mora of Japanese,” “Mora

Check,” “Accent and Intonation,” and “Useful Phrases.” Although these are supposed to be textbook bound, they can stand alone and be used by any beginning student. The “Useful Phrases” section is a wonderful way to introduce aspects of Japanese culture associated with expressions included in the text. This section provides the context in which these expressions are used.

Sections on “Utilization” and “Eavesdropping” are positive features of *JSL*. Some teachers have used these sections as student assignments. However, the CD-ROM program includes answers to questions included in both sections. Although it may be good for students who are engaged in self-study to have these answers, this aspect of the program may create problems for teachers who use these sections for homework assignments.

As students might do, I tried the CD-ROM program without looking first at the User’s Guide. It is almost self-explanatory. The User’s Guide is clearly written and easy to follow but is not absolutely necessary in terms of technical instruction. Students may find a single one-page explanation of some of the technical aspects of the CD-ROM program more helpful.

The *JSL’s Interactive CD-ROM Program* reflects the author’s careful thought and planning. It is a long-awaited, excellent tool for students and teachers who use this text. ♦



**Yasuko Ito Watt** is Associate Professor in the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department and Coordinator of the Japanese Language Program at Indiana University, Bloomington. She recently co-authored a book, *Reader’s Guide to Intermediate Japanese*, published by the University of Hawaii Press.

*Japanese: The Spoken Language Interactive CD-ROM Program* is available from the Annenberg/CPB Collection and Yale University Press. Price is \$59.95 for individual two-CD-ROM set and User’s Guide and \$500 for Lab Pack containing 10 two-CD-ROM sets, 10 User’s Guides, and Faculty Guide. Additional User’s Guides and Faculty Guides are available for \$15 each. The CD-ROM is supplemented by textbooks, audio cassettes, videos with core conversations of the textbook, and cultural videos from *The Pacific Century* and *Faces of Japan* series.







## China: The PBS Series

>> Produced by Ambrica Productions in association with WGBH Boston and Channel 4 Television UK. Directed by Sue Williams. Distributed by Zeitgeist Films. Titles include: *China in Revolution, 1911–1949* (1989), *The Mao Years, 1949–1976* (1994), and *Born Under the Red Flag* (1997). Each title is 120 minutes.

This series provides a quite remarkable video resource for teaching about twentieth-century China at the college level. It is doubtful anyone would want to use all six hours of the material, but the quality of the production is high throughout and some sections could be exceptionally useful material in any class dealing with twentieth-century China.

Because the outstanding historical footage points out the great gulf in lifestyle and expectations that separate our students from most people living in twentieth-century China, the film may also be used profitably in high-school classes. Yet, the combination of voice-over narrative and dubbed interviews that characterize all six hours of the material may be difficult to assimilate for less advanced audiences.

Sue Williams and her collaborators worked on this program, as can be seen from the production dates, for over a decade, so it is no rush job. Its greatest strength is the combination of a clear narrative line, marvelous choices of historical film, and lengthy interviews with Chinese participants. Much of the historical film sections are in black and white and show flooding, military action, public executions, great public demonstrations in Beijing, and other scenes that convey to the viewer

an eye-witness sense. The authenticity of archival footage overall is heightened by what appear to be faked bandages swathing the head of the American newsreel reporter, Floyd Gibbons, as he reported on the very real destruction in Shanghai as it was under Japanese attack in 1937.

Together with archival film, it is the many interviews that give this video its strongest quality of immediacy and reliability. The six hours contain some quite remarkable interviews with important persons such as Chen Li-fu, the conservative modernizing ideologue close to Chiang Kai-shek, and Yang Chengwu, a Chinese Communist peasant general who participated in the Long March, as well as obscure figures such as Sun Mingjiu, the soldier who took Chiang Kai-shek prisoner at Xi'an in 1936.

For the earliest portion, where so many of the participants are now dead, the interviewees include figures such as Chiang Wei-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek, who describes his recollections of his father and Sun Yat-sen as they talked in the garden.

In all three parts of the video the same structure is used: historical film footage interspersed with interviews. Most of the interviewees are Chinese, although there are some Americans such

as John Paton Davies and Edward Rice, veteran U.S. State Department officials with long experience in China. The production clearly benefited from close consultation with academic specialists, in particular Professor Paul Pickowicz of the University of California at San Diego who has had a long interest in using film for teaching history. These academics remain off screen in this production. Their presence is reflected in the narrative and in the choice of topics covered.

The formatting reflects this material's broadcast television origins in that each two-hour cassette is further broken down into what were two-hour broadcast programs. The series has a strict, but useful chronological sequence reflected in the titles of each hour-long segment: "The Battle for Survival, 1911–36," "Fighting for the Future, 1937–49," "Catch the Stars and Moon, 1949–60," "It's Right to Rebel, 1960–76," "Surviving Mao, 1976–84," and "The New Generation, 1985–97."

Within each program there are topical segments. For example, the "Battle for Survival, 1911–36" deals well with both Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek's leadership of the Nationalist Party, The Communists' Long March, and Chiang Kai-shek's kidnapping in Xi'an in 1936. The last program "The New Generation" deals with the student movements of 1986–87 as well as the Tiananmen incident of 1989 through a combination of on-the-scene footage of the demonstrations and the Communist Party leadership activities interspersed with interviews with Chinese participants and observers. There are short, but effective sections on China's one-child population policy and Deng Xiaoping's continuing drive for economic development in the early 1990s. The tone of the new generation is artfully caught through an interview with the rock star, Cui Jian, and the use of his music in the opening and closing sequences of this program.

For teachers there will be a tendency to use these videos as hour-long, stand-alone substitutes for a lecture or as a lecture supplement. In fact, the material could work much better as a short presentation on a class topic centered on one of the five-to-twenty-minute segments from a particular program. Thus, from "It's Right to Rebel" an instructor could use the longish segment on the Cultural Revolution, or the shorter one on the death of Lin Biao to provide a narrative and some wonderful historical footage in part of a larger class session devoted to those topics. There obviously is a lot the film does not cover, so it obviously will not replace a text or lectures, but is probably well worth its price for the supplementary material it can provide.

The teacher's guide was not included in the materials I reviewed, but my guess is that individual teachers would find little difficulty finding the

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# Between Two Worlds: A Japanese Pilgrimage

>> Produced by Joanne Hershfield and Susan Llyod. Distributed by University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning. 1994. 35 minutes.

Pilgrimage is a practice shared by cultures and societies worldwide. It has allowed people from diverse social classes and races an opportunity for contact with culturally-specific concepts of divinity, empowerment, ease-ment, and salvation, all of which are embodied at specific sites. Among the world's most famous sites of pilgrimage— Lourdes (France), Jerusalem (Israel/ Palestine), Mount Kailasa (Tibet), Varanasi (India) and so on—must be added the eighty-eight temples of Shikoku in Japan.

We are fortunate to have a video that deals with the complex phenomena of the Shikoku pilgrimage in contemporary Japan. Though this

practice is but a few centuries old, the tradition of visiting sacred sites in order to achieve this-worldly and future benefits (called *riyaku* in Japanese) goes back to the earliest regimes.

Japanese emperors and their consorts of the seventh century left the safety and comfort of their palaces to travel to distant waterfalls, mountains, and hot springs—all for the purpose of accessing (both through priestly intermediaries and direct experience) the

beneficial power of those sites. In later centuries, both elite and commoners made oftentimes hazardous journeys to climb Mount Fuji, visit the

... skillfully juxtaposes  
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pilgrimage event, from urban  
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pilgrimage in general to elderly  
white-clad pilgrims visiting  
serene mountain temples  
shrouded in mist.



shrines at Ise (where, in 1705, an estimated 3,620,000 individuals visited), or attend other famous temples and shrines.

*Between Two Worlds* attempts to show the people, settings, motivations and practices comprising a modern-day pilgrimage to the Shikoku temples. It skillfully juxtaposes what the narrator calls “old and new images” of the pilgrimage event, from urban bustle, neon signs, and youthful ignorance of pilgrimage in general to elderly white-clad pilgrims visiting serene mountain temples shrouded in mist. We learn and see early on the crew making the video, as well as a couple key questions motivating their own quest: Can they convey adequately the complexity of pilgrimage to western audiences? Is this “real” pilgrimage or only sight-seeing on the part of the so-called “pilgrims” themselves?

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## From the Editorial Board

“From the Editorial Board” is a new column of the newsletter. Beginning with this issue, members of our on-campus editorial board will comment on their experience with media on Asia and suggest exemplary materials in their field of expertise. The first of these columns is written by Clark E. Cunningham, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology.

My media experience has included still photography which I did extensively during anthropological research in Southeast Asia. In my teaching, I used films, and then videos, extensively as well as colored slides from my own collection. In the field, I tried to keep teaching needs in the back of my mind and to photograph sequences of events or themes which would be useful. My first research experience was as field assistant to a geographer in Sumatra and Java (Indonesia) in 1955–56. For that year I borrowed the Argus 35mm camera of my father, and I took some photos which I used in teaching “Peoples and Cultures of Insular Southeast Asia” until my retirement forty years later. I have one beautiful shot of terraced rice fields in west Java, near Bandung, in which one sees wet rice agriculture at all stages of

its development (from preparing a field for planting to full harvest) being done in different terraces at one time. This has been an invaluable slide to use with Clifford Geertz’s book, *Agricultural Involution*.

The arrival of videos was to benefit my teaching about Southeast Asia and Asian Americans and courses in introductory anthropology and medical anthropology (in which I always had Asian content and used slides as well). Some particularly useful and well-made videos are *The Three Worlds of Bali*, *Dadi’s Family*, *Between Two Worlds: A Hmong Shaman in America*, and *Knowing Her Place*. The first is a rich portrayal of continuity and change in the complex cultural and religious life of Bali. The second gives great insight into extended family life in a village of north India and particularly the complex roles of women in changing times. The third shows the



Clark E. Cunningham

ways in which a Hmong refugee shaman continues practice of his healing ways in Chicago in the 1980s and the cultural and social pressures on Hmong in the U.S. The fourth sensitively shows the stresses of marriage, parenting, identity, and psychological well-being for a woman from India living in the U.S., one who has been brought up partly in India, partly in the U.S. Each video can stimulate rich discussions. ♦

### Videography

*Between Two Worlds: A Hmong Shaman in America* (1996, 30 min.) is available from Filmmakers Library. Price is \$250 for purchase and \$55 for rental.

*Dadi’s Family* (59 min.) is available from Documentary Educational Resources. Price is \$145 for purchase and \$40 for rental.

*Knowing Her Place* (1990, 40 min.) is available from Women Make Movies. Price is \$250 for purchase and \$75 for rental.

*Three Worlds of Bali* (59 min.) is available from Documentary Educational Resources. Price is \$145 for purchase and \$40 for rental.



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**Bullfrog Films**, P.O. Box 149, Oley, PA 19547. Tel: 800-543-3764. Fax: 610-370-1978. Email: [bullfrog@igc.org](mailto:bullfrog@igc.org). Web site: <http://www.bullfrogfilms.com>.

**Cheng & Tsui Company**, 25 West Street, Boston, MA 02111-1268. Tel: 800-554-1963. Fax: 617-426-3669. E-mail: [orders@cheng-tsui.com](mailto:orders@cheng-tsui.com). Web site: <http://www.cheng-tsui.com>.

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**Facets Video**, 1517 West Fullerton Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614. Tel: 800-331-6197. Fax: 312-929-5437. E-mail: [sales@facets.org](mailto:sales@facets.org). Web site: <http://www.facets.org>.

**Filmakers Library**, 124 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016. Tel: 212-808-4980. Fax: 212-808-4983. E-mail: [info@filmakers.com](mailto:info@filmakers.com). Web site: <http://www.filmakers.com>.

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